



The Neighborhood Connection

March 2005, Volume 3



Presented by State Assemblyman Ron Calderon

Serving the 58th Assembly District including the communities of Montebello, Pico Rivera, Hacienda Heights, Downey and portions of Whittier, East Los Angeles, S. El Monte and the City of Industry

The month of March brings with it a variety of celebrations for everyone in the community. In addition to religious events such as Easter, March is a time to honor woman and their contributions to our society. And who can forget St. Patrick's Day! In this edition of the Neighborhood Connection, I also discuss new legislative proposals from the Banking and Finance Committee, which I Chair, that aim to protect consumers and stimulate our economy. I hope you enjoy this month's newsletter and celebration's – Assemblyman Ron Calderon.

Woman of the Year Award

This year's 58th District recipient of the Assembly's "woman of the year award" was presented to Ms. Reyna Del Haro of Kaiser Permanente Baldwin Park. The award is presented each year to women in each legislative Assembly district that have contributed significantly to their local communities. Ceremonies took place in the Assembly chamber in the State Capitol on Monday, March 14th.

Reyna is the Area Director of Public Affairs for Kaiser Permanente Baldwin Park. She has been an outstanding contributor to the communities of the 58th Assembly District in her capacity as both a professional and private citizen. Reyna has volunteered her personal time and experience to local nonprofits as a board member and advisor and works diligently with each group to ensure their services and programs reach those most in need.

Reyna is an inspirational leader with a long history of accomplishments and I am pleased to pay tribute to such a talented and dedicated individual. Reyna has a rare combination of competence and compassion that makes her an extraordinary role model for young people.

West Nile Virus has an early start in 2005

Recently cases of the West Nile Virus have been detected in the San Gabriel Valley as early as mid-February. According to the Vector Control Department, these cases are clear indicators of an early arrival of mosquito season in Southern California. The recent rain storms followed by dry-sunny days have created a perfect environment for mosquitoes to breed, according to Vector Control. Citizens are again asked to take precautions to avoid mosquito bites. My office will issue a Public Service Announcement beginning in April advising citizens how to protect themselves and what proactive measures to take. Sample mosquito repellent products containing DEET are available through my office while supplies last. For more information and sample products or brochures, please contact my office at 323.838.5858.

Seniors Against Investment Fraud (SAIF)

The Seniors Against Investment Fraud (SAIF) program was recently recommended for elimination by the Legislative Analysts Office. The program is a statewide outreach campaign that alerts and educates Californians over 50-years of age on ways to avoid being victimized by investment and telemarketing fraud crimes. SAIF has been hailed as a blue print model for the entire nation by the North American Securities Administrator's Association on how to execute a fraud prevention program for American seniors. In an effort to save the program, which has trained District Attorney's in 45 counties and has educated more than 200,000 on how to protect themselves, I requested that the Assembly's Budget Subcommittee #4 review the program and support it through continued funding.

I am pleased to report that the budget Subcommittee #4 did review the program and has agreed and approved continued funding for the SAIF program.



Did You Know?

The Shamrock, or three-leafed clover, was a sacred plant in ancient Ireland, referred to as a “seamroy” by the Celts, because of its symbolism of the rebirth of Spring. During the English occupation of Ireland during the 17th Century the shamrock was worn by the Irish as a symbol of Irish pride and heritage and their displeasure with English rule.



State News - Tax Amnesty Available

The State of California is offering amnesty until March 31, 2005 to individuals that owe past-due income or franchise and sales taxes. To apply for amnesty and to avoid penalties and possible prosecution individuals can contact the Franchise Tax Board at 1-800-852-5711 or visit their website at www.taxes.ca.gov to learn more. Officials estimate that the “tax gap” (what’s owed vs. what’s paid) is \$6.5 billion annually.

Banking and Finance News

On March 11th I, along with other members of the Banking and Finance Committee, hosted a public hearing on Scams and the Military. The hearing, entitled, “In the Line of Fire: Financial Scams Aimed At Members of the Armed Services.”

Expert panelist provided detailed reports on current scam activities aimed at military personnel including identity theft and possible remedies and punishments the Legislature may consider. This informational hearing was open to the public and many stakeholders attended.

Legislative News

I have introduced a new legislative bill that would allow businesses to self-insure with better rates, premiums and coverage. **AB 82** seeks to make significant changes to statutes and regulations governing group self-insurance plans in our state and make them more user-friendly. My goal is to make these self-insurance plans more readily available to small and mid-size businesses, trade groups and nonprofits. Additionally, AB 82 would improve the ongoing regulations of group self-insurance plans to assure the strength and solvency of this important alternative to coverage from the State Compensation Insurance Fund or private workers’ compensation insurance carriers.

Final Note

If you enjoyed this copy of the NEIGHBORHOOD CONNECTION by all-means pass it along to a friend or family member! If you wish to be removed from this list or have suggestions for future issues please contact my office at 323.838.5858 or by email at Assemblymember.Ron.Calderon@assembly.ca.gov.

Assemblyman Ron Calderon

District 58

400 N.Montebello Blvd., Suite 100

Montebello, CA 90640

323-838-5858/Fax 323-838-0677

e-mail: Assemblymember.ron.calderon@assembly.ca.gov

website: <http://.democrats.assembly.ca.gov/members/a58>

